

Message Text

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21

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 SAB-01 SAM-01 AID-05 TRSE-00 (ISO) W

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R 160650Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY SANA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5723

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

COMIDEASTFOR

USCINCEUR

C O N F I D E N T I A L SANA 1493

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR

SUBJ: FOREIGN MINISTER ON LOCAL SITUATION

1. DURING JUNE 15 MEETING WHICH COVERED SEVERAL SUBJECTS BEING REPORTED IN SEPTELS, FOREIGN MINISTER ASNAG DESCRIBED YEMEN'S CURRENT INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION AS QUIET AND RELAXED, NOTING THAT THE PERIOD OF CRISIS IS NOW "OVER". HE INDICATED THAT SHAIKH ABDULLAH AL-AHMAR IS "FINISHED" AS A POLITICAL FIGURE BECAUSE OF HIS STUPIDITY AND SHORTSIGHTEDNESS. HE SAID THAT THE SAUDIS HAVE STILL NOT ENTIRELY UNDERSTOOD THIS MESSAGE BUT THAT THEY SHOUL REALIZE THAT AL-AHMAR IS NOT A MAN TO BE TRUSTED. ASNAG CONTINUED THAT HE WOULD DO EVERYTHING IN HIS POWER TO ASSURE THAT, BECAUSE OF HIS UNRELIABILITY, AL-AHMAR WILL NOT BE RE-NAMED SPEAKER OF THE NEW MAJLIS AL-SHURA TO BE ELECTED SOMETIME LATER THIS YEAR. ASNAG OBSERVED THAT AL-AHMAR REMINDS HIM VERY MUCH OF QADDAFI, AN UNSTABLE PERSON CAPABLE OF MAKING COMPLETE SHIFTS IN HIS POLITICAL ALLIANCES JUST AS QADDAFI HAS RECENTLY DONE TOWARDS THE MARXIST

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REGIME IN ADEN.

2. ASNAG INDICATED THAT THE PRESENT CABINET WILL REMAIN IN OFFICE UNTIL MAJLIS ELECTIONS LATER THIS YEAR. HE ADDED THAT THERE WILL BE SOME INTERIM CHANGES, HOWEVER, SPECIFICALLY THAT DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER BARAKAT MAY BE REMOVED BECAUSE HE HAS BEEN TRYING TO PLAY BOTH SIDES IN THE RECENT HAMDI/AL-AHMAR CONFRONTATION; AND ALSO MINISTER OF INTERIOR MUTAWWAKIL, WHO HAS BEEN LONG IDENTIFIED WITH THE ABU LUHUM CLIQUE, MAY BE DROPPED. IN ADDITION, A NEW MINISTER OF MUNICIPALITIES WILL BE NAMED AS THE THE PREVIOUS INCUMBENT MUTAHIR AL-NADHIR, A CLOSE FRIND OF SHAIKH AL-AHMAR, WAS RECENTLY FORCED OUT OF OFFICE AND IS NOW IN RIYADH NO DOUBT SPREADING ERRONEOUS RUMORS ABOUT THE CURRENT SITUATION HERE.

3. ASNAG STATED THAT IN THE MEANTIME AL-HAMDI IS ENJOY-
ING UNPRECEDENTED POPULARITY IN THE COUNTRY AND THAT HE INTENDS TO BUILD HIS POSITION AND THAT OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT ON THIS BROAD SUPPORT. ASNAG SAID THAT AMONG OTHER THINGS HAMDI WILL BE MAKING TRIPS OVER THE NEXT FEW WEEKS TO THE MAJOR PROVINCES IN ORDER TO EXPLAIN THE GOALS OF THE CORRECTIVE MOVEMENT AND TO ASSERT HIS LEADERSHIP AS WELL AS THE AUTHORITY OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT. ASNAG AGREED THAT THE NEXT SIX MONTHS TO A YEAR WILL BE CRITICAL AS HAMDI AND HIS COLLEAGUES WILL NOW HAVE TO CARRY OUT THE PROMISES FOR REFORM WHICH THEY HAVE BEEN MAKING OVER THE LAST YEARS.
SCOTES

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL LEADERS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 JUN 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: RowellEO
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975SANA01493
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750219-0131
From: SANA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750646/aaaabqdm.tel
Line Count: 90
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: RowellEO
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 JUN 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <04 NOV 2003 by RowellEO>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FOREIGN MINISTER ON LOCAL SITUATION
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, (AL-ASNAG, ABDULLAH), (AL-AHMAR, ABDULLAH)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006